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## City of Milwaukee Health Department Continues Investigation of E. coli Cases related to Ground Beef Recall

The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) today recommended that Marquette University (MU) assist the MHD in notifying the campus community that three (3) students have been confirmed with E. coli infection believed to be associated with the recent recall of ground beef by Cargill Meat Solutions Inc. These students all reported consumption of hamburger patties implicated in the recall during a private student event held in September.

Approximately 120 hamburgers were served at a free student cookout held prior to a Marquette University women's soccer game on Sept. 21, 2007 at Valley Fields, 1818 W. Canal St., starting at approximately 6:00 p.m. The hamburgers were purchased from Sam's Club prior to the event and were only recently identified by the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service on Saturday, Oct. 6, as part of a national recall of ground beef products produced by a Cargill plant in Butler, WI. Minnesota public health officials have also reported similar cases of E. coli infection now thought to be related to the recall.

One of the three individuals who consumed hamburger at the Marquette event was hospitalized with E. coli infection and is currently recovering. The other two individuals did not require hospitalization. MHD and Marquette Student Health Services have not recorded any additional cases.

The MHD and Marquette University are working cooperatively to initiate a campus-wide notification today in order to identify any other students who may have become ill after eating hamburgers at the above event. Symptoms of E. coli O157:H7 infection include diarrhea (often bloody) and severe abdominal cramping. Symptoms of infection usually appear 3-8 days after eating contaminated food items. Some persons can become infected but not show symptoms.

At this time, any person who ate hamburgers provided at the September 21<sup>st</sup> cookout AND became ill with diarrhea and/or abdominal cramping within eight days after the event should contact Marquette's Student Health Service at 414-288-5745 or the MHD at 414-286-3521. This information will be held medically confidential and be used by the MHD to further characterize the scope of illness in the

community as related to the ground beef recall as well as to emphasize preventive hygiene measures and to identify and prevent any possible or continued person- to -person transmission within the community.

To prevent E. coli infections, the MHD recommends:

- Cook beef to 160 degrees, until the meat is no longer pink and the juices are clear.
- Avoid eating raw or undercooked beef.
- Avoid drinking unpasteurized milk or milk products.
- Avoid drinking unpasteurized fruit juices.
- Always carefully wash your hands with plenty of soap and water after bowel movements and before and after food preparation.

Further information on the recall and E. coli O157:H7 infections can be found at [www.milwaukee.gov/health](http://www.milwaukee.gov/health) or by calling the MHD at 414-286-3521 between the hours of 8-4PM Monday-Friday. Information is also available through the toll-free USDA meat and poultry hotline at 1-888-674-6854.